

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MARCH 29, 2007

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2007—08 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 611

Introduced by Assembly Member Nakanishi
(Coauthor: Assembly Member Bass)

February 21, 2007

~~An act relating to public health.~~ *An act to amend Section 3523 of the Business and Professions Code, and to add Article 2.8 (commencing with Section 127950) to Chapter 2 of Part 3 of Division 107 of the Health and Safety Code, relating to physician assistants.*

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 611, as amended, Nakanishi. Physician assistants: educational loan program.

Existing law, *the Physician Assistant Practice Act*, establishes the Registered Nurse Education Fund and requires that moneys in the fund be used for specified nurse education programs *Physician Assistant Committee of the Medical Board of California*. Under existing law, the committee licenses physician assistants under the name of the board and regulates the practice of physician assistants.

This bill would ~~declare the intent of the Legislature to enact legislation that would create an educational loan repayment program for physician assistants in the state that is modeled after loan repayment programs funded by the Registered Nurse Education Fund~~ *create the California Physician Assistant Scholarship and Loan Repayment Program (program) within the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development to provide scholarships to physician assistant students and to repay qualifying educational loans of physician assistants who practice in medically underserved areas of the state and in specified*

clinics. The bill would establish the California Physician Assistant Scholarship and Loan Repayment Program Fund (fund) in the State Treasury and would make its revenue available for expenditure for the program upon appropriation by the Legislature. The bill would direct the deposit of voluntary contributions made by a physician assistant upon renewal of his or her license into the fund. The bill would require the Physician Assistant Committee to report on the program, as specified, in the annual report of the Medical Board of California. The bill would make implementation of the program contingent upon sufficient revenue being available in the fund for those purposes.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: ~~no~~ yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 *SECTION 1. Section 3523 of the Business and Professions*
2 *Code is amended to read:*
3 3523. (a) (1) All physician assistant licenses shall expire at
4 12 midnight of the last day of the birth month of the licensee during
5 the second year of a two-year term if not renewed.
6 ~~The~~
7 (2) *The* committee shall establish by regulation procedures for
8 the administration of a birthdate renewal program, including, but
9 not limited to, the establishment of a system of staggered license
10 expiration dates and a pro rata formula for the payment of renewal
11 fees by physician assistants affected by the implementation of the
12 program.
13 ~~To~~
14 (b) *To* renew an unexpired license, the licensee shall, on or
15 before the date of expiration of the license, apply for renewal on
16 a form provided by the committee, accompanied by the prescribed
17 renewal fee.
18 (c) *At the time of renewing a physician assistant license, the*
19 *licensee may make a contribution of twenty-five dollars (\$25) to*
20 *the board for the sole purpose of funding the California Physician*
21 *Assistant Scholarship and Loan Repayment Program established*
22 *pursuant to Article 2.8 (commencing with Section 127950) of*
23 *Chapter 2 of Part 3 of Division 107 of the Health and Safety Code.*
24 *The board shall transmit the contribution submitted pursuant to*
25 *this subdivision for deposit in the California Physician Assistant*

1 *Scholarship and Loan Repayment Program Fund established*
2 *pursuant to Section 127952 of the Health and Safety Code.*

3 *SEC. 2. Article 2.8 (commencing with Section 127950) is added*
4 *to Chapter 2 of Part 3 of Division 107 of the Health and Safety*
5 *Code, to read:*

6
7 *Article 2.8. California Physician Assistant Scholarship and*
8 *Loan Repayment Program*
9

10 *127950. (a) There is hereby established, in the Office of*
11 *Statewide Health Planning and Development, the California*
12 *Physician Assistant Scholarship and Loan Repayment Program,*
13 *referred to as the program for purposes of this article. The program*
14 *shall provide scholarships to pay for the educational expenses of*
15 *students enrolled in physician assistant schools and to repay*
16 *qualifying educational loans of physician assistants who agree to*
17 *practice in designated medically underserved areas as provided*
18 *in this article.*

19 *(b) The Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development*
20 *may also provide scholarships and loan repayments for physician*
21 *assistants who practice in a clinic licensed pursuant to subdivision*
22 *(a) of Section 1204.*

23 *127951. The Office of Statewide Health Planning and*
24 *Development shall administer the program utilizing the same*
25 *general guidelines applicable to the federal National Health*
26 *Service Corps Scholarship Program established pursuant to*
27 *Section 254l of Title 42 of the United States Code and the National*
28 *Health Service Corps Loan Repayment Program established*
29 *pursuant to Section 254l-1 of Title 42 of the United States Code,*
30 *with the following exceptions:*

31 *(a) A physician assistant student shall be eligible to participate*
32 *in the program if he or she agrees to practice at a site located in*
33 *an area of the state where unmet priority needs exist for primary*
34 *care family physicians, as determined by the Health Workforce*
35 *Policy Commission.*

36 *(b) No matching funds shall be required from an entity in the*
37 *practice site area.*

38 *127952. (a) The California Physician Assistant Scholarship*
39 *and Loan Repayment Program Fund is hereby established in the*
40 *State Treasury.*

1 (b) Revenues from the contributions made pursuant to Section
2 3523 of the Business and Professions Code, as well as any other
3 private or public funds made available for purposes of the
4 program, shall be deposited into the fund. Upon appropriation by
5 the Legislature, moneys in the fund shall be available for
6 expenditure by the Office of Statewide Health Planning and
7 Development for purposes of implementing the program pursuant
8 to this article.

9 (c) The Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development
10 shall be under no obligation to administer the program under this
11 article until sufficient moneys have been accumulated in the fund
12 and appropriated to the office by the Legislature.

13 127953. The Physician Assistant Committee of the Medical
14 Board of California, in conjunction with the Office of Statewide
15 Health Planning and Development, shall describe in the annual
16 report of the Medical Board of California, the experience of the
17 program since its inception, evaluate its effectiveness in improving
18 access to health care for underserved populations, and make
19 recommendations for maintaining or expanding its operation. The
20 report shall also include the following data:

21 (a) The number of the participants in the program.

22 (b) The locations where the participants practice or attend
23 school.

24 (c) The amount expended for the program's operation and the
25 amount collected in donations for the program.

26 127954. This article shall be implemented only to the extent
27 that sufficient moneys are available in the California Physician
28 Assistant Scholarship and Loan Repayment Program Fund to
29 administer the program.

30 ~~SECTION 1. It is the intent of the Legislature to enact~~
31 ~~legislation that would create an educational loan repayment~~
32 ~~program for physician assistants in the state, that is modeled after~~
33 ~~loan repayment programs funded by the Registered Nurse~~
34 ~~Education Fund, established pursuant to Section 128400 of the~~
35 ~~Health and Safety Code.~~